

**Minutes of the Schools Forum Meeting**  
**14<sup>th</sup> May 2015**  
**(4.00 pm, Conference Room 1, NLBP)**

<b>Attended</b>	<b>Type of Member</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Representing</b>	<b>Member until end</b>
	Primary Foundation/VA HT(1)	Tim Bowden (VICE-CHAIR)	Holy Trinity CE	Sep 2016
	Primary Foundation/VA Headteacher	Matthew Glenn	St Mary's & St John's	Apr 2018
	Primary Community Gov (1)	Lesley Ludlow	Moss Hall Infants	Apr 2017
	Primary Community Governor	Nigel Taylor	Wessex Gardens	May 2018
	Primary Community Gov (1)	Cllr Brian Salinger (substitute for Elizabeth Pearson)	Holly Park/Livingstone	Sep 2016
	Special School Governor	Gilbert Knight (CHAIR)	Oakleigh	Sep 2016
	Special School Headteacher	Jenny Gridley	Oakleigh	Sep 2016
	Primary Community HT (1)	Jeanette Adak	Monkfrith Primary	Sep 2016
	Primary Community HT	Jude Stone	Tudor / Cromer Road	Mar 2018
	Unions	Keith Nason	National Union of Teachers	Sep 2016
	Secondary Governor	Patricia French	St Mary's CE High	Dec 2016
	Secondary HT (1)	Seamus McKenna	Finchley Catholic	Nov 2016
	Primary Community HT (4)	Sally Lajalati	Colindale Primary	Sep 2014
	Secondary HT (2)	Simon Horne	Friern Barnet	Oct 2017
	Private Early Years Provider	Sarah Vipond	Middlesex Uni. Nursery	Sep 2016
	Academy Representative	Tom Brighton (substitute for Angela Trigg)	London Academy	Sep 2016
<b>LA Officers</b>	LBB Officer	Ian Harrison	Education & Skills Director	
	LBB Officer	Val White	Lead Commissioner	
	LBB Officer	Catherine Peters	CSG – Head of Finance	
	LBB Officer	Cinzana Khan	CSG – School Funding	
	LBB Officer (Clerk)	Carol Beckman	CSG – School Funding	

<b>Did not attend</b>				
<b>Members</b>	Primary Community HT (3)	Clare Rees	Sunnyfields Primary	Feb 2017
	Academy School Principal	Jack Newton	Grasvenor Infants	Nov 2015
	Academy School Principal	Jane Beaumont	Copthall	Jan 2016
	Academy School Principal	Michael Whitworth	Wren Academy	Nov 2016
	Academy School Principal	Jo Djora	The Hyde Academy	Jul 2017
	Primary Foundation/ VA Gov	Anthony Vourou	St Johns CE N11	Sep 2016
	Primary Foundation/VA HT(2)	Maureen Kelly	St Theresa's Catholic	Jul 2017
	14-19 Provider Representative	David Byrne	Barnet & Southgate Col	
	Pupil Referral Unit	Joanne Kelly	Pavilion PRU	Sep 2016
	Nursery School Headteacher	Perina Holness	Moss Hall Nursery	May 2017
	Academy School Principal	Kate Webster	QE Girls	July 2015
	Academy Representative	VACANT		
	Primary Community Gov	VACANT		
<b>Non Members</b>	EFA Observer	Beverley Pennekett	EFA	
	Elected Member	Cllr R Thompstone	Lead member for Children's Services	
	LBB Officer	Chris Munday	Commissioning Director for Children and Young People	
	LBB Officer	Nick Adams	CSG – Financial Services	
	LBB Officer	Penny Richardson	Interim Head of Inclusion and Skills	

## 1. WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

GK welcomed new members Nigel Taylor, Jude Stone, Matthew Glenn and Chris Munday who was expected to arrive later on. GK also welcomed Cllr Brian Salinger who was attending for the first time as a substitute for Elizabeth Pearson.

## 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Elizabeth Pearson, Perina Holness, Jo Djora, Michael Whitworth, Kate Webster and Kit Davies.

## 3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Accepted as a true and accurate record.

## 4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

## 5. MATTERS ARISING

PF pointed out that the minutes showed that the number of members who had voted had dropped from 13 to 12 and asked whether someone had left the meeting at that point. GK agreed voting numbers should be checked more carefully in future.

## 6. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

### 6.1 2015/16

### Budget

Catherine Peters

CP presented the paper, explaining that the main reasons for differences between the S251 and the draft budget presented to Schools Forum in December 2014 were the adjustments to the Authority Proforma Tool (APT) and Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) actual funding. She added that there was a new budget for Direct Payments to parents for SEN transport.

CB explained that the latest estimate of the DSG, based on announcements from the DfE in December shows a lower total than the original estimate. CP advised that there will be adjustments to the DSG throughout the financial year.

GK reminded people that they should not feel shy about asking questions if they have any as it is important that all members fully understand the issues being discussed.

### 6.2 2016/17 Budget Planning

IH alerted the SF to the Annual Report to the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding (CELS) Committee regarding a review of EYFF, SFF and High Needs etc. He added there had been complaints regarding a lack of reporting structure and that going forward; there would be more transparency with an annual report from the council.

There were no proposed changes to the SFF yet but CB had been doing some modelling to see if some schools can be helped. Options will be discussed with the SF then will be put forward for consultation.

EYFF: There were some issues raised regarding nursery schools and whether they should receive more money because of the additional costs associated with running a nursery school.

IH stated he would consult on whether the funding would be staying the same or whether the LA would be giving nursery schools more and that this would need to be done by January. He would also be reporting on recent changes to SEN bandings and PRUs (mostly for information), then come back to SF.

IH confirmed consultations would take place in July for EYFF and SFF and a decision for SFF would need to be made by the end of October. He stated that he would report back by the end of the autumn term for EYFF and would be consulting all sectors including PVI's.

KN added that it would be useful to know the dates for the CELS meetings.

SV asked whether the EYFF review would include 2 year old funding and IH confirmed that it would not.

SH asked how the decision would be made and whether there would be some sort of working party so that the Schools Forum would agree the SFF. IH replied that the LA would decide but would look at various options and pressures. VW said that a working party was a good idea and SH volunteered to be part of it.

SH also asked whether the pressures were seen mainly in primary schools or secondary schools and IH replied that there were pressures coming from both.

Cllr S said that an EYFF review would be welcome and that had PH been present, she would have said there were flaws in the current formula and would have wanted it to be reviewed with the support of the Schools Forum. Cllr S went on to say that, using Freedom of Information requests to all other local authorities, he had found that Barnet was the only council to operate on a flat rate and that Croydon council paid a £96k lump sum per nursery school to cover costs such as business rates. He added that decisions should be taken by elected members.

SV stated she had attended a PVI network meeting recently where a number of PVI's were also questioning their sustainability on the current flat rate.

IH said that if nursery schools funding is increased, then PVI funding will decrease unless the extra funding came from the SEN budget.

KN asked whether councillors are told about the Schools Forum meetings and Cllr S replied that they are not. VW pointed out that the information about the meetings is on the website and KN said that it might be useful if they are told. Cllr S said that people won't see the information unless they are looking for it and that they need to be pointed in the right direction.

GK asked why the consultations are going to take place over the school holidays. IH stated they would start earlier but that a full half term would be allowed to respond.

## 7. ITEMS FOR DECISION

### 7.1. 2014/15 Budget Monitoring

#### a) Provisional Outturn Position

CP presented the papers for budget monitoring and added that the outturn position was presented to the Performance and Contract Management Committee on Tuesday 12th May 2015.

She stated there was an underspend of £3.5 million, which was mainly due to the underspend on two year olds and by a reduced requirement for contingency funding as there was better quality information available for top-ups and a reduction in expensive placements.

She said that the projected underspend in February was £3.2m and that the increase was largely due to high needs adjustments. JG commented that although £3.5 million sounds like a lot of money, when shown as a percentage of the total budget, 1.67% does not seem like a lot.

SL asked what the in-year bursaries were for and CP replied that they were Post-16 bursaries to be passported to schools from the EFA. Cllr S recommended a charitable trust that exists in Chipping Barnet that schools may be able to request funds from and KN suggested it could be put in the Schools Circular.

GK noted that the underspend was creeping up but said he recognises it is the result of good management of budgets and IH reiterated that the underspend was mainly due to an underspend on High Needs and 2 year olds.

#### b) Two Year Olds

IH presented the papers in DT's absence, asking for a carry forward of £735,208 for 2 year olds in order to facilitate capacity building.

He stated that Barnet has not provided as high a percentage of places to eligible children as the DfE wanted and that there were many reasons for this, including having places in the right location and informing families properly.

The DfE has recommended that LAs use their underspend to get place numbers up. The proposal is for £735k of the underspend to be used and an implementation plan has been provided. This sum of money will be used to encourage schools to take 2 year olds and inform them that there is support available. Targeted marketing will be used, aimed at hard to reach families (to make them aware of the scheme) and better identification of eligible families. LL asked what the targeted marketing would involve. IH stated that this was still being developed..

IH highlighted that funding to the LA would no longer be allocated based on target places but on actual take-up. SV said that private nurseries don't feel the money is enough. She stated that she has turned away two year olds but could expand and that nobody had consulted her about taking on two year olds. IH stated that there would be staffing and capital funding to make it possible.

VW stated that in terms of schools providing places for two year olds, Barnet was the second worst in the country, with a very low take-up which wasn't unusual for LAs in

London. There are also pressures from reception classes as there is a high demand for funding for reception places.

She said that the LA has not yet managed to engage schools and that so far it had mainly been PVI's that have risen to the challenge. A large campaign will be required to encourage schools in Barnet as many eligible families identified don't want to send their children to childminders, they prefer schools or nurseries and so better targeting will be required.

LL said that the new software for identifying families looks difficult to use.

VW said that there needs to be a step change in capacity. IH added that Barnet has reached 43% of the target 40% of eligible children in the borough and that although we don't expect 100%, Barnet is still below the national average of 50%.

SV added that with two year old provision, families need to be involved too and VW added that in some boroughs, parents can stay with their children at the settings.

SL said that from the schools point of view, there were practicalities such as staffing and accommodation issues that may cause difficulties and that they would need a lot more support. She added that they were already having recruitment problems for older children as it was and that there were also many other extra issues. IH stated that direct assistance would be available.

VW stated that she was working with the 3 nursery hub to provide support to other schools as there had been government discussions about doubling FEEE.

KN highlighted that there would be recruitment issues to which IH replied that the council would help with recruitment but that it was a secondary issue because getting provision in the right place and finding the families were the first issues.

SL asked whether the issue was empty two year old places and IH replied that the council can offer places. SV said that their setting was turning children away.

GK suggested physical space might be a problem. IH agreed and said he wouldn't pursue schools where there was no scope to find extra space but that space for 2 year olds on other premises was also an option.

SL asked what would happen with regards to all the other extra regulations and VW said that a headteachers pack is being produced.

SV asked where the greatest demand was in the borough and IH confirmed that it was the west of the borough.

Proposal: £735,208 from underspend requested to spend on 2 year old place development.

Cllr S asked whether SF could make decisions and IH replied that they could.

KN asked what else the money could be spent on and IH said it would still leave £2.8 million.

Vote:

For: 15

Against: 0

## **8. DRAFT AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING**

Agenda for next meeting agreed.

The main discussion will be about the 16/17 budget, including SFF and EYFF after June's CELS committee.

The working group for the funding formula was agreed as:

Simon Horne  
Jeanette Adak  
Sally Lajalati  
Seamus McKenna  
Liz Pearson.

Cllr S nominated Liz Pearson as the working party should consist of full members rather than substitutes. No decisions will be made by the working group but issues will be raised and discussed in order for ideas to be brought back to SF.

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

PF said that at the last meeting, there were proposals for alternative management of schools and education in borough and asked what effect this would have on the Schools Forum.

VW said that she is working on alternative delivery models but the Schools Forum remains on the council side and statutory responsibilities will not be affected

GK asked whether the information is being disseminated effectively to governors. VW said there were various events for governors (e.g. COG meetings) and there would be a COG event on 8<sup>th</sup> June. In July there will be a chance to meet the bidders. Dates will be announced in the Director's report to Governors. LL asked if there was a contact list for all governors - VW said they would be using the governors clerking list which includes those that are not clerked by the council).

KN asked whether someone instead of COGs could attend. VW said she would consider this.